

Appln No. 10/647,076

Amdt date November 22, 2004

Reply to Office action of June 23, 2004

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Amended) A plant-cultivating container having a receiving portion for receiving a plant body; the container having, as at least a portion thereof, a selective moisture vapor-permeable portion comprising a non-porous hydrophilic film which prevents direct contact between the receiving portion and external water; the selective moisture vapor-permeable portion not allowing water to pass therethrough, but allowing water vapor to pass therethrough.

2 (Original) A plant-cultivating container according to claim 1, wherein the moisture vapor-permeable portion has a moisture vapor-permeability of 1×10^3 g/m²·24 hours or more.

3. (Original) A plant cultivating container according to claim 1, wherein the ratio of the area of the moisture vapor-permeable portion to the total surface area of the outside surface of the container on the side thereof to be in contact with water is 20% or more.

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4. (Original) A plant-cultivating container according to claim 1, wherein the moisture vapor-permeable portion is provided over the total surface area of the container.

5. (Previously Amended) A plant-cultivating container according to claim 1, wherein the selective moisture vapor-permeable portion comprises a composite material comprising a material having selective moisture vapor-permeability which prevents water from passing through the selective moisture vapor-permeable portion, but allows water vapor to pass therethrough; and another water-permeable material.

6. (Original) A plant-cultivating container according to claim 1, wherein the selective moisture vapor-permeable portion comprises a composite material comprising a material having selective moisture vapor-permeability which prevents water from passing through the selective moisture vapor-permeable portion, but allows water vapor to pass therethrough; and another water-permeable material disposed outside of the selective moisture vapor-permeable material.

7. (Currently Amended) A plant-cultivating container according to claim 6, wherein the water permeable material is ~~[in the form of]~~ a perforated ~~[plate]~~ bottom of the container.

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8. (Previously Amended) A plant-cultivating method, comprising:

providing a plant-cultivating container having a receiving portion for receiving a plant body; the container, having as at least a portion thereof, a selective moisture vapor-permeable portion comprising a non-porous hydrophilic film which prevents water from passing through the selective moisture vapor-permeable portion, but allows water vapor to pass therethrough;

disposing a plant body-retaining support and a plant body in the container; and

cultivating the plant body while causing at least the selective moisture vapor-permeable portion to contact water and to prevent direct contact between the plant body and external water.

9. (Original) A plant-cultivating method according to claim 8, wherein the water in contact with the moisture vapor-permeable portion is temperature-controlled water.

10. (Original) A plant-cultivating method according to claim 8, wherein the water in contact with the moisture vapor-permeable portion is water which as such is not suitable for the growth of a plant.

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11. (Original) A plant-cultivating method according to claim 10, wherein the water in contact with the moisture vapor-permeable portion is salt water, polluted water or hard water.

12. (Currently Amended) A plant-cultivating container comprising a plant-receiving portion defined by a bottom wall and one or more sidewalls adjacent the bottom wall, the plant-receiving portion having an open top for receiving a plant, wherein at least a portion of at least one of the bottom wall and one or more sidewalls comprises a selective moisture vapor-permeable portion comprising a non-porous hydrophilic film that prevents direct contact between the plant body and the external water, wherein the selective moisture vapor-permeable portion ~~[that]~~ permits water vapor to pass therethrough, but ~~[that]~~ does not permit water to pass therethrough.

13. (Previously Presented) The plant-cultivating container of claim 1 wherein the nonporous hydrophilic film comprises a material selected from the group consisting of polyvinyl alcohol, cellophane, cellulose acetate, cellulose nitrate, ethyl cellulose, silicone rubber, polyester, neoprene, polyethyl methacrylate, polystyrene, and copolymers thereof.

14. (Previously Presented) The plant-cultivating container of claim 12 wherein the nonporous hydrophilic film

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comprises a material selected from the group consisting of polyvinyl alcohol, cellophane, cellulose acetate, cellulose nitrate, ethyl cellulose, silicone rubber, polyester, neoprene, polyethyl methacrylate, polystyrene, and copolymers thereof.